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A

S O N N E T,

SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,

TO THE

EARL OF BOTHWELL,

Speedily will be published,

A NEW EDITION OF THE
COUNTRY BOOK-CLUB,
A P O E M.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

A
S O N N E T,
SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,
K TO THE
EARL OF BOTHWELL;
PREVIOUS TO
HER MARRIAGE WITH THAT NOBLEMAN.
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED A
COPY OF THE FRENCH SONNET,
WRITTEN, AS IT IS SAID,
WITH THE QUEEN'S OWN HAND;
AND FOUND IN A CASKET, WITH OTHER SECRET PAPERS.

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S O N E T

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

EARL OF NOTTINGHAM

HER MARRIAGE WITH THE EARL

TRANSFORMED INTO A SONNET

COPY OF THE ORIGINAL SONNET

WITH THE QUEEN'S OWN HAND

AND LOVED BY A COUNTRY WHICH SHE NEVER LEAVES



P R E F A C E.

MUCH hath been said, and much written, respecting the authenticity of Mary's letters to Bothwell. The guilt or innocence of the Queen's character was, in a great measure, involved in the question : and different opinions and arguments were consequently supported by different parties.

It seems, however, now to be agreed on all hands, that there is no *real* foundation, even upon the supposition most unfavourable to Mary, for the charge brought against her, of being accessory to the King's murder : " or even of " having previously given her consent to his

“death.” Her passion for Bothwell, if such a passion ever existed in her mind, can never, indeed, be defended on the grounds of moral rectitude, or common justice : but its atrociousness will be highly extenuated, when the insolence and ingratitude of Lord Darnley are taken into the account. He had repaid her tenderness with neglect and insult ; violated the marriage vow : and carried that power which, in the moment of weakness and credulity, she fondly bestowed upon him, to the most dangerous extremes. He had even formed plots and conspiracies against her person and government : and his whole conduct towards her, was that of a tyrant, and a ruffian.

Mary’s heart was the heart of sensibility. She felt the insults that were offered her, and too rashly determined to revenge them. She felt too that she was a sovereign ; and unhappily the prejudices she had imbibed in the court of France, where she was educated, did not at all serve to lessen her ideas of princely power and dignity. But, though resolved on revenge, she
was,

was, as yet, undetermined as to the measures that were to be taken, in order to complete her purpose. Her first step was to deprive him of that power which he had so grossly abused : and to remove him from her person and court.

Darnley appears to have felt the whole force of this indignity : for we find the tyrant, soon afterwards, sunk into the most abject of flatterers : soliciting to be restored to his former honours, and admitted to the Queen's bed.

But Mary still kept him at a distance. She was in the bloom of youth, amiable, accomplished, captivating ; and allowed to be the most beautiful woman of the age. Every woman who is handsome knows the power of her charms ; but every woman cannot handle these formidable weapons with equal dexterity. The Queen of Scots, however, was well skilled in the science of *offence*. Conscious of her strength, she took the field against Darnley, and began to play off her skilful manœuvres. The custom of the age did not prohibit men from visiting

the private apartments of the ladies. The Queen gave splendid suppers, and entertainments to the nobility, in her bed-chamber. She selected her favourites, and made use of every stratagem, to fire the mind of Darnley with rage and indignation.

It was about this time that Lord Bothwell came to court. That Mary, from the first moment she saw him, conceived a design of punishing Darnley with the infringement of those vows which he had himself violated, has been strenuously asserted by one party, and as strenuously denied by the other. The truth seems to be, that her pride and dignity only were wounded: and that her sole object was *resentment*. She meant to disturb, to harass, and perplex him: "to speak daggers, but use none."

A very * ingenious writer, in his vindication of Mary, has maintained that, far from being

* Mr. Whitaker.

desperately

desperately in love with Bothwell, she absolutely despised him. "If this assertion be true, "it may be asked, what becomes of the Sonnet, "which is addressed by the Queen to Bothwell, "and written in the most glowing colours? It "is, of course, a fabrication."—The Translator candidly acknowledges, that he has himself but little doubt of its being a forgery. But that it is an *elegant* forgery, he believes will not be denied. Mr. Whitaker confidently ascribes it to Buchanan; and asserts, that it was manifestly composed with an intention of corroborating Mary's supposed letters. On the contrary, Hume and Robertson, with most of the historians that went before them, are clearly of opinion, that it was composed by the Queen, and written with her own hand. It is not for the Translator to determine a question which has already been so ably discussed: and which appears still to be involved in some degree of darkness. Whether the Sonnet be genuine or fabricated, whether it was written by Buchanan or the Queen of Scotland, its merit as a composition

sition is the same. It is the business of the Translator to clothe it in an English dress:— The Reader will exercise his own judgment respecting its authenticity. The Sonnet is given as it was found in Anderson's Collection of State Papers. The present translation is *far from literal*: as it has been attempted to dress Mary's sentiments, or rather the sentiments imputed to Mary, in such language as she herself might be supposed to make use of, were she now living.

The most suspicious circumstance against the Queen, and which indeed tends to give both the Letters and Sonnets an air of probability, is her marrying Bothwell within a few days after the King's murder. But * “ Mr. Whitaker “ makes it appear, that Mary, on her return “ from Stirling to Edinburgh, was surprised by “ Bothwell when she little expected it (though “ perhaps she was the only person of consequence there, to whom the plot was not “ either known, or by whom it was not, in some

* Monthly Review.

“ measure,

“ measure, suspected) — and hurried away by
 “ him to the Castle of Dunbar. That *there* she
 “ was locked up by him, for many days, a close
 “ prisoner, without access to any person in
 “ whom she could confide.—That it was then,
 “ for the first time, that he dared to address her
 “ as a lover.—That she spurned at him with
 “ contempt, and rejected his proposal with the
 “ indignation which it deserved.—That he still
 “ importuned her with unabating eagerness, and
 “ to forward his suit, he then shewed her the
 “ bond he had obtained, recommending himself
 “ for her husband, and subscribed by many of
 “ the principal nobility in the kingdom.—That
 “ though this convinced her that she was be-
 “ trayed, and abandoned, it produced no
 “ other effect than indignant and unavailing
 “ tears.—That in counterfeiting despairing love,
 “ he threatened to take away his own life, and
 “ actually wounded himself, to excite her com-
 “ passion. But neither did this, nor any other
 “ means which he could devise, induce this
 “ high-minded princess to lend a patient ear to
 “ his suit.—At last, goaded on by those ambi-
 “ tious

" tious hopes, that his false associates had ex-
 " cited in his bosom, he had recourse to his last
 " device. *Sleepy draughts*, not *love potions*, were
 " administered: and while she remained in a
 " state of insensibility, he brutally triumphed
 " over her weakness, and abused the honour of
 " his sovereign!—It was only then—after she
 " was degraded to the lowest state of abase-
 " ment—after she saw herself deserted by all
 " her subjects,—the slave of a man who over-
 " awed, as she thought, the whole nation, that
 " her mind began to fail,—and that at last she
 " was forced to agree to elevate to the dignity
 " of a husband, that man whom her subjects en-
 " joined her to accept, but whom she herself de-
 " tested. So long as she had reason to believe,
 " from the appearances of things that fell under
 " her own observation, that the nation at large
 " was attached to Bothwell, and concurred in
 " opinion with the nobility who had recom-
 " mended him for a husband, she was forced to
 " acquiesce: but no sooner did an armed force
 " appear in the field, under the avowed pretext
 " of vindicating her cause against him, than she
 " cheerfully

“ cheerfully abandoned him, and joined with
“ those who she fondly believed had a feeling
“ sense of the injuries she had suffered, and a
“ desire to promote the real welfare of her
“ subjects.”

In short, whatever was Mary's real character, whether she was the most abandoned and profligate, or the most innocent and virtuous of women, it appears that Elizabeth was determined, at all events, to accomplish the destruction of her more beautiful rival. Many of the charges which she brought against her were weak and futile, and others openly flagitious: nor can it any longer be doubted, neither need it be concealed, that the whole tenor of her conduct towards the unfortunate Mary was treacherous, persecuting, and abominable.

"objectively abandoned him, and joined with
 "those who the family believed had a feeling
 "of the nature the had killed, and a
 "desire to promote the trial which in
 "fact, was the only one."

As for whatever was Mary's real character,
 whether she was the most abandoned and profligate,
 or the most innocent and virtuous of women,
 it is not for us to determine. It is for the
 "jury to determine, to account for the character of
 "her life, and the character of the charges
 "which the evidence against her was weak and
 "faint, and others openly disputed; nor can it
 "any longer be doubted, whether need it be con-
 "sidered that the whole point of her conduct
 "was the unfortunate Mary was unscrupulous,
 "persecuting, and abandoned."

A

SONNET, &c.

INSTRUCT me Heaven!—What language
shall I find,
To prove the state of this disorder'd mind;
Where hopes and fears in quick succession move,
Where Bothwell reigns, and every sense is love.
Lord of my heart, yet author of my shame,
For him I've quitted honours, friends, and fame:

*O Dieux, ayez de moi compassion,
Et m'enseigniez quelle prouve certain
Je puis donner, qui ne lui semble vain,
De mon amour, et ferme affection.
Las! n'est il pas ja en possession
Du corps, du cœur, qui ne refuse paine,
Ny deshonneur, en la vie incertaine,
Offense de parentz, ne pire affliction?*

And, doom'd the wounds of conscience still to bear,
 Shar'd every torment that the guilty share.
 For Bothwell's fate I draw this vital breath;
 For Bothwell's sake I'd close these eyes in death:

What further proofs of weakness can I dare?
 Have I not given my kingdom to his care?—
 My child, my people, honour, life, and soul,
 All, all are subjected to his controul!

*Pour luy, tous mes amis c'estime moins que rien,
 J'ay hazardé pour luy et nom et conscience :
 Je veux pour luy au monde renoncer;
 Je veux mourir pour luy avancer.*

*Que reste il plus pour prouver ma constance ?
 Entre ses mains, et en son plein pouvoir,
 Je metz mon filz, mon bonheur, et ma vie,
 Mon païs, mes subjectz, mon ame assubjectiè,*

The same our int'rests, pleasures, and desires,
 No will but his my faithful bosom fires.
 That guide I'll follow still, though still misled,
 Till envy send swift ruin on my head.
 Let storms arise, let horrid whirlwinds roar,
 And dash the vessel of the state ashore;
 I'll view the wreck, unconquer'd by alarms,
 And seek a safe asylum in his arms.

*Est tout à luy, et n'ay autre vouloir
 Pour non objet, que sans le decevoir,
 Suivre je veux malgré toute l'envie
 Que de ma foy, luy faire appercevoir,
 Que pour tempeste ou Bonnace qui face,
 Jamais ne veux changer demeure ou place.
 Brief je ferray de ma foy telle preuve
 Qu'il cognoistra, sans fainte, ma constance.*

Such proofs of constancy shall shew that art
 Ne'er found a treach'rous dwelling in my heart.
 Unlike the * fair who wins his envied smiles,
 With sighs, and soft complaints, and woman's wiles.
 She loves through int'rest, and the world approves;
 How diff'rent her reward who truly loves!
 But is she not his wife?—Heaven doom'd it so:—
 Ah! fatal source, whence all my sorrows flow!

*Non par mes pleurs, ou sainte obeyssance,
 Comme autres ont fait, mais par divers espreuve.
 Elle pour son bonheur vous doit obeyssance,
 Moy, vous obeyssant j'en puis recevoir blasme,
 N'estant, a mon regret, comme elle votre femme.*

* Lady Jane Gordon, the Earl of Huntley's sister.

And, like a wife, she plays a fordid game,
 Self-will'd, and careless of her husband's fame.
 What diff'rence 'twixt the lover, and the friend!—
 His dire misfortunes, that my bosom rend,
 'That teach these streaming tears my griefs to speak,
 And send the flush of terror o'er my cheek,
 With stoic ease, and apathy she bears:—
 She's all indifference, and I all fears.

*Et si n'aura pourtant en ce point pre-eminence;—
 Pour son profit elle use de constance,
 Car ce n'est peu d'honneur d'être de voz biens dame.
 Et moy pour vous aymer, j'en puis recevoir blafme,
 Et ne luy veux ceder en toute l'observance.
 Elle de votre mal n'a l'apprehension,
 Moy, je n'ay nul repos tant je crains l'apparence.*

Her parents' threats, dear lord, first made her thine:
I love, and still will love, in spite of mine.

Through your alliance is her house restor'd
To grandeur; and herself well nigh ador'd.
Plac'd in the sunshine of a court, she grew
In honours that her fathers never knew.
Of these yourself conferr'd the envied part;
She shar'd a kingdom when she gain'd your heart.

*Par l'aduis des parentz elle eut vostre accointance
Moy malgré tous les miens vous porte affection:
Et de sa loyauté prenez ferme assurance.*

*Par vous, mon cœur et par vostre alliance,
Elle a remis sa maison en honneur:
Elle a jouy par vous la grandeur
Dont tous les siens n'ayent nul assurance.
De vous, mon bien, elle a eu la constance,
Et a gaignè pour un temps vostre cœur.*

One worthless lover, who alone could fire
 Her icy bosom into warm desire,
 Was all she barter'd for those manly charms,
 That won her Queen, and set her sex at arms.
 Fool! not to dote, with exquisite delight,
 On him who, first in valour, fame, and might,
 Sense, virtue, bounty, all that's good and wise,
 No rival knows beneath the boundless skies.

*Par vous elle a eu plaisir en bon heur,
 Et pour vous a receu bonneur et reverence,
 Et n'a perdu, sinon la jouyssance
 D'un fascheux sot, qu'elle aymoît cberement.
 Je la plains de n'aymer donc ardamment
 Celui qui n'a en sens, ny en vaillance,
 En beauté, en bonté, ny en constance
 Point de seconde: Je vis en ceste foy.*

When first you deign'd to worship at her shrine,
 Reluctantly her faithless vows met thine.
 A gloomy sadness hung upon her brows,
 Her breast was chill'd with everlasting snows,
 A flatterer, heedless of each female grace,
 She joyless sunk within your warm embrace :
 Yet void of elegance, and every art,
 She reign'd a very tyrant o'er your heart.

*Quant vous l'aimiez elle usoit de froideur,
 Sy vous souffriez pour s'amour passion,
 Qui vient d'aymer de trop d'affection,
 Son doigt montroit la tristesse de cœur :
 N'ayant plaisir ne vostre grand ardeur,
 En ses habitz monstrois, sans fiction,
 Qu'elle n'avoit paour, qu'imperfection
 Peust l'effacer hors de ce loyal cœur.*

No terrors in your absence, no fond fears,
That reckon " hours for months, and days for
" years."

No gentleness she knew,—her soul unstor'd
With tender passions, worthy such a lord.
From you her fortune sprang, yet still ingrate,
She gave no recompense, but pride and hate.
At length, deserted, she begins to melt;
And feigns those ardours which she never felt.

*De votre mort je ne vis la peur
Que meritoit tel mary et seigneur.
Somme de vous elle a eu tout son bien,
Et n'a prisé ny jamais estimé
Un si grand heur, si non puis qu'il n'est sien,
Et maintenant dit l'avoir tant aymé.*

Too late her error, with despair, she sees:—
 Stripp'd of her charms, in vain she strives to please,
 And yet her letters, with false vows replete,
 Empassion'd murmurings, and phrases meet,
 And varnish'd tales, and sentimental strains,
 The idle offspring of some poet's brains,
 She writes, and publishes to all the town;
 While Bothwell calls the fond complaints her own.

*Et maintenant elle commence à voir
 Qu'elle estoit bien de mauvais jugement,
 De n'estimer l'amour d'un tel amant;
 Et voudroit bien mon ami decevoir,
 Par les escriptz tout fardez de scavoir,
 Qui pourtant n'est en son esprit croissant
 Ains emprunté de quelque autheur eluissant,
 A fait tres bien un envoy sans l'avoir,*

Her borrow'd eloquence, dissembled fears,
 Loud plaints, deluding sighs, and trickling tears,
 With more sincerity, he thinks, are given,
 Than all the oaths, I swore to him, and Heaven.
 In such assurances he dares confide,
 Yet doubts my constancy, so often tried!
 O! my sole happiness, my only lord!
 How shall I ratify my plighted word?

*Et toutes fois ses parolles fardez,
 Ses pleurs, ses plaincts, remplis de fictions,
 Et ses hautz cris et lamentations,
 Ont tant gaignè qui par vous sont gardez,
 Ses lettres escriptes ausquels vous donnez foi,
 Et si l'aymez, et croyez plus que moi.
 Vous la croyez, las! trop je l'apperceoy,
 Et vous doutez de ma ferme constance,
 O! mon seul bien, et mon seul esperance,
 Et ne vous puis asseurer de ma foy!*

While you suspect your Queen inclin'd to rove,
 A very woman in the arts of love :
 And deem her words, her vows, more light than
 wind,
 That swiftly flies, and leaves no track behind.
 Mere wax her heart, that, melted by desire,
 Takes new impressions, as new forms inspire.
 Still, still you think me fickle, light, and vain,
 And still your cruelty augments my pain !

*Vous m'estimez legier qui le voy,
 Et si n'avez en moy nul assurance ;
 Et soupconnez mon cœur sans apparence,
 Vous deffiant à trop grand tort de moy.
 Vous ignorez l'amour que je vous porte,
 Vous soupsonnez qu'autre amour me transporte,
 Vous estimez mes parolles du vent,
 Vous depeignez de cire mon, las ! cœur,
 Vous me pensez femme sans jugement :
 Et tout cela augmente mon ardeur.*

My flame encreases, and will yet encrease,
Till my sense fail, and life itself shall cease.
Approv'd by thee, my only friend and guide,
By sure experience shall that flame be tried.

For thee, the ills of royalty I'll bear;—
Its sweets, its blessings only, thou shalt share!
No pleasures will I taste when thou'rt away,
Except the heart-felt pleasure to obey.

*Mon amour croist, et plus en plus croistra,
Tant que je vivrai, et tiendray à grand heur,
Tant seulement d'avoir part en ce cœur,
Vers qui enfin mon amour paroistra,
Sy tres à clair que jamais n'en doutra.*

*Pour lui je veux rechercher la grandeur,
Et feray tant qu'en vray cognostra,
Que je n'ay bien heur, ne contentement,
Qu'à l'obeyir, et servir loyaument.*

For thee my health which, fapp'd by grief, decays,
 I'll guard with care, and look for better days.
 For thee I'll scorn all obloquy, all blame,
 Unchang'd by fortune, unsubdu'd by shame.

What griefs I suffer'd, and what tears I shed !
 When first you reign'd the partner of my bed !
 You triumph'd then through treachery and art,
 Nor yet had gain'd dominion o'er my heart.

*Pour luy j'attendz toute bonne fortune,
 Pour luy je veux garder santé et vie,
 Pour luy tout vertu de fuyure j'ay envie,
 Et sans changer me trouvera toute une,*

*Pour luy auffi je jette mainte l'armes,
 Premier quand il se fist de ce corps poffeffeur,
 Duquel alors il n'avoit pas le cœur.*

But when, ambitious of your Queen's applause,
You bled to justify her drooping cause :
Your ghastly form, well nigh a lifeless corse,
I view'd with anxious dread, and fond remorse.
E'er since I've scorn'd the grandeur of a throne,
Despis'd all pomp, and liv'd for you alone.
Risqu'd fame and conscience, quitted parents,
 friends,
And every tie whence happiness depends.

Puis me donna un autre dur allarme,
Quand il versa de son sang mainte dragme,
Dont le grief il me vint lesser douleur,
Qui m'en pensa oster la vie, et frayeur
De perdre, las ! le seul rempar qui m'arme.
Pour luy depuis j'ai meprise l'honneur,
Ce qui nous peult seul pourvoir de bonheur.
Pour luy j'ai bazardé grandeur et conscience,
Pour luy tous mes parentz j'ai quite et amis,
Et tous autres respectz sont apart mis.
Brief de vous seul je cherche l'alliance.

Sole guardian of my life, what magic charms
 Can yet enchain you, in your Mary's arms ?
 For, vain and confident, I dare divine,
 In spite of envy, you'll continue mine.
 No sorrow shall our future days molest,
 No latent wish disturb my peaceful breast ;
 Guided by you, in fortitude I'll rise,
 Defy all dangers, and all threats despise.

*De vous je dis seul soutien de ma vie,
 Tant seulement je cherche m'assurer,
 Et si ose de moi tant presumer,
 De vous gagner malgré toute l'envie.
 Car c'est le seul desir de vostre chere amie
 De vous servir, et loyaument aymer,
 Et tous malheurs moins que riens estimer,
 Et votre volonté de la mien suture :
 Vous cognoistrez avecques obeyssance.*

In duty loyal, with a heart at ease,
 In each amusive * science skill'd to please,
 Void of all artifice, I'll still be true,
 And, scorning others, live and die for you.

My only life, my treasure, and my soul,
 When shall we meet, unfetter'd by controul,
 To speak each sentiment without disguise,
 Propose new pastimes, and new joys devise ?

*De mon loyal devoir n'omettant la science,
 A quoi j'estudier ay pour tousieurs vous complaire ;
 Sans aymer rien que vous, soubz la subjection,
 De qui je veux sans nulle fiction,
 Vivre et mourir, et à ce je obtempere.*

*Mon cœur, mon sang, mon ame, et mon soucy,
 Las ! vous m'avez promis qu'aurons ce plaisir
 De deviser aveques vous à loysir.*

* Queen Mary had made great progress in music. She had a pleasing voice, and played on the lute to admiration.

For now a stranger to each gay delight,
 Alone I languish through the tedious night;
 Your absence fills my soul with every fear,
 No bliss is mine, while Bothwell is not here.

Not seeing you, I've ventur'd to compose
 These strains, expressive of my tender woes.
 Nor know I whether you'll condemn or praise
 The well-meant tribute of my feeble lays.
 But well I know, and soon ev'n you will prove,
 Who most shall profit, and who best can love.

*Toute la nuit, ou je languis icy,
 Ayant le cœur d'extreme Paour transy,
 Pour voir absent le but de mon desir.*

*Ne vous voyant selon q'avez promis,
 Je ay mis la main au papier pous escrire,
 De un different que je voulu transcrire.
 Je ne scay pas quel sera votre advis,
 Mais je scay bien qui mieux aymer scaura,
 Vous diriez bien qui plus y gaignera.*

6 MA 50

F I N I S.